

RESOLUTION NO. 09- 184

A RESOLUTION BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA, OPPOSING THE APPROVAL OF OIL AND GAS DRILLING IN FLORIDA'S WATERS IN AREAS OTHER THAN THOSE ALREADY APPROVED FOR SUCH EXPLORATION AND RECOMMENDING THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE ESTABLISH A SPECIAL TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE SHORT AND LONG TERM IMPLICATIONS OF OIL AND GAS DRILLING AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES.

WHEREAS, Florida's economy depends on its multi-billion dollar tourism industry, which resulted in more than 82 million visitors coming to Florida in 2008, during which period tourism generated over \$4 billion dollars in taxable sales; and

WHEREAS, Pinellas County is largely dependent upon the tourism industry, making our natural resources, our beaches, and the Gulf of Mexico vital to our economy; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, Pinellas County drew more than 13.6 million total tourists, with more than 5.1 million overnight tourists generating an economic impact of more than \$6.6 billion dollars and over \$26 million dollars in tourist development tax revenues, while employing over 83,000 people in businesses that directly or indirectly support tourism; and

WHEREAS, 95% of Pinellas County tourists cite the beaches as one of the top reasons they come to Florida; and

WHEREAS, in 1993, Pinellas County learned how environmentally and economically destructive an oil spill can be when a vessel collision at the entrance to Tampa Bay resulted in a spill of more than 300,000 gallons that reached Pinellas beaches as far away as 14 miles and resulted in a 45% drop in tourism; and

WHEREAS, the area with the potential for the greatest risk of environmental damage is the eastern part of the Gulf of Mexico, off the western coast of Florida; and

WHEREAS, Pinellas County understands the need to search for newer and cleaner alternative forms of energy and is a willing partner to examine all options to secure the nation's energy needs which do not unduly threaten our economic and natural resource vitality.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF PINELLAS COUNTY that the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners opposes allowing offshore oil and gas drilling expansion past the areas already approved for pre-leasing, leasing and oil production activities, and urges the Florida Legislature to establish a special task force or study committee to evaluate the short and long term implications of oil and gas drilling and other alternative energy sources, including effects on the economy of the state and its local governments, coastal communities, and fish and wildlife, and report the findings to a future session of the Florida Legislature.

This Resolution shall become effective upon its adoption.

Commissioner Latvala offered the foregoing resolution and moved its adoption, which was seconded by Commissioner Welch, and upon roll call the vote was:

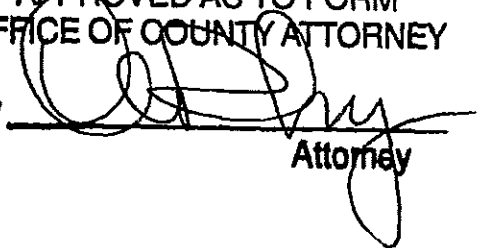
AYES **Harris, Seel, Latvala, Morroni, Welch and Brickfield.**

NAYS **Bostock.**

Absent and not voting **None.**

APPROVED AS TO FORM
OFFICE OF COUNTY ATTORNEY

By

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke, written over a solid horizontal line.

Attorney